

C H E P S T O W   R U R A L   D I S T R I C T   C O U N C I L

A N N U A L   R E P O R T

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M E D I C A L   O F F I C E R   O F   H E A L T H

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"High Trees",  
Chepstow, Mon.



CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL  
LIST OF RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Chairman:- Mr. L. H. Gardner

Vice-Chairman:- Colonel E. R. Hill

Councillors

Mr. B. Beale	Mr. A. H. Morgan
Mr. L. Budden	Mrs. C. L. Morgan
Mr. D. T. Coleman	Mr. R. A. Newall
Mr. E. M. Davis	Mr. W. J. Parker
Mr. C. A. Evans	Mr. G. Powell
Mr. W. H. Gale	Mr. D. F. E. Price
Mr. D. P. George	Mr. G. E. Pritchard
Mrs. G. I. Heath	Mr. A. V. Reece
Mr. C. L. Hill	Mr. E. G. Saunders
Mr. W. E. G. Hodges	Mr. R. Skinner
Mr. L. M. Horton	Mr. S. Sparkes
Mr. L. Hughes	Col. D. R. Stanley
Mr. L. T. Jacka	Mr. W. J. Titley
Mr. L. A. Jones	Brig. G. B. Vaughan-Hughes
Mr. S. G. Jones	Mr. F. Vicarage
Mr. D. I. C. Lewis	Mr. F. C. Walker
Mr. W. Little	Mr. A. M. Williams
Mr. R. A. Mawhinney	

Officers of the Council

Clerk	-	Mr. T. T. Birbeck, F.A.I., F.R.V.A.
Medical Officer of Health	-	Dr. E. N. Dowell, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
Chief Public Health Inspector and Surveyor	-	Mr. L. Whittingham, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., Cert.S.I.B., M.A.Rur.S., Certified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.
Public Health Inspector and Deputy Surveyor	-	Mr. D. C. Powell, A.M.I.P.H.E., M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I., M.R.I.P.H.H., Cert.S.I.B., Incorporated Sanitary Engineer, Certified Inspector of Meat and Other Foods.

# CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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T. T. BIRBECK  
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

TELEPHONE NO. 2214

*"High Trees,"*  
*Chepstow.*

23rd August, 1962.

The Chairman and Members,  
Rural District Council of Chepstow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of your District for the year ended 31st December, 1961.

The health of your district continues to be satisfactory.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Whittingham and Mr. Powell for their help and co-operation.

I remain,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. N. Dowell

Medical Officer of Health

## CHEPSTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL - 1961

### Statistics

The estimated mid-year population was 11,490. In 1950 it was 10,090.

The natural increase which is the figure that the number of births exceeds the number of deaths, was 58. The natural increase in 1960 was 64.

### Births

<u>Births</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	89	80	169
Illegitimate	4	7	11

In 1959 the total live births was 208 and in 1953 there were 158. The live birth rate per 1000 of population for Monmouthshire was 17.85.

<u>Still Births</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	2	4

In 1958 there were 7 still births.

### Infant Mortality

#### Deaths of Infants

<u>Under one year of age</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	1	3
Illegitimate	1		1

The following gives a list of the deaths of infants under one year of age, giving age at and cause of death:-

(1) Female	4 days	1a. Atelectasis
		b. Prematurity
(11) Male	2 days	1a. Severe haemolytic disease of newborn.
(111) Male	3 days	1a. Prematurity
(1V) Male	5 days	1a. Pneumonia and Pleurisy
		b. Adrenal haemorrhage

The infant Mortality Rate per 1000 live births for Monmouthshire was 27.97.

Deaths

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
	69	52	121

There were 134 deaths registered in 1959 and 115 deaths in 1960.

In 1956 there were 7 deaths due to neoplasm of the lung.

3 deaths occurred during the year at the County Welfare Home which is situated in your District.

The death rate per 1000 of population for Monmouthshire was 12.49.

The following table gives a classification of the cause of death and the number attributed to each cause.

Ctd.....

DEATHS - 1961

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Malignant neoplasm, stomach.	1	
Tuberculosis, respiratory.		1
Malignant neoplasm, lung.	3	
Malignant neoplasm, breast.		1
Malignant neoplasm, uterus.		4
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms.	6	2
Diabetes.		1
Vascular lesions of nervous system.	7	4
Coronary disease, angina.	13	19
Hypertension with heart disease.	2	1
Other heart disease.	6	7
Other circulatory disease.	2	1
Influenza.	2	4
Pneumonia.	6	1
Bronchitis.	5	1
Other diseases of respiratory system.	1	
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.		1
Nephritis and nephrosis.	1	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases.	5	2
Motor vehicle accidents.	3	
All other accidents.	3	1
Suicide.	3	
	-----	-----
TOTAL:	<u>69</u>	<u>52</u>



## GENERAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

### Diphtheria

For the ninth consecutive year no case was notified.

### Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year 286 children were immunised against diphtheria and 280 were given a booster dose. In 1960 the number fully immunised was 160 and those who received a booster dose was 50.

Owing to the occurrence of a case of paralytic poliomyelitis in the rural district, it was necessary to suspend immunisations from the 28th June to the 27th July.

### Vaccinations. (Smallpox)

During the year 104 primary vaccinations against smallpox were carried out. Of this number 42 were children born in 1961 and 42 were born in 1960. There were 118 primary vaccinations in 1960.

### Scarlet Fever

There were no notifications. In 1960 fourteen were received.

### Whooping Cough

For three years, the number of notifications of whooping cough has been nil. This contrasts with 1956 when there were 20 notifications.

During the year 147 children were immunised against whooping cough and of that number 95 were children born in 1960. Immunisations against whooping cough in 1960 were 159.

### Measles

The biennial peak of incidence of this disease in the rural district was maintained. 65 notifications were received. For 1960, there was a nil return.



### Poliomyelitis

One case was notified. This was a child aged five months and adenovirus type 1 was isolated from the faeces. In 1960 there were no notifications.

During the year the vaccination scheme against poliomyelitis was extended. Owing to the greater risk of infection that school children appear to have, it was decided that a 4th re-inforcing dose should be offered to children when they enter school and also to children already at school who are five years old but have not reached the age of 12 years.

Portskewett, Sudbrook and Rogiet schools were visited on the 12th July and 130 children received a 4th re-inforcing dose.

### Dysentery

As in 1960 there were no notifications.

### Food Poisoning

As for dysentery, the return was nil.

### Tuberculosis

The following were the notifications of new cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis received during the year:-

(1)	Male	12 years	Lungs. Pleural Effusion
(2)	Female	25 years	Lungs.
(3)	Female	17 years	Lungs.
(4)	Male	35 years	Lungs.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES  
(other than TUBERCULOSIS)  
ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS

DISEASE	Cases Notified - Age Groups							Total All Ages
	Under 1 Yr.	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 9	10- 14	15 - 25	25 & Over	
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cerebro-spinal Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Polio- myelitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Enteric Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	-	14	10	37	2	1	1	65
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Diseases	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL:	1	14	10	37	2	1	1	66

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector's Annual Report for the  
Year 1961

Inspections during the year

Dairies and Cowsheds	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Food Preparing Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	182
Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
Food Inspections	..	..	..	..	..	..	381
Drainage	..	..	..	..	..	..	118
Drain Testing	..	..	..	..	..	..	38
Sewerage	..	..	..	..	..	..	188
Water Supply	..	..	..	..	..	..	602
Housing (Complaints)	..	..	..	..	..	..	68
Infectious Disease & Disinfection	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Nuisances	..	..	..	..	..	..	59
Disinfestation	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Shops Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	218
Refuse Collection and Disposal	..	..	..	..	..	..	192
Factories	..	..	..	..	..	..	146
Building Byelaws	..	..	..	..	..	..	365
Petrol Licences	..	..	..	..	..	..	59
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	692

Work Done

By Owners after Informal Notices:-

Housing Repairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	44
Drainage Repairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Nuisances Abated	..	..	..	..	..	..	9

By Owners after Statutory Notices:-

Housing Repairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	-
Drainage Repairs	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Nuisances Abated	..	..	..	..	..	..	3

Notices Served

Informal under Housing Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	26
Informal under Public Health Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	44
Statutory under Housing Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	-
Statutory under Public Health Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	5

## WATER SUPPLY

Since the formation of the Newport and South Monmouthshire Water Board in October, 1960, the duties of this Council are confined to the maintenance of public wells and the routine sampling of mains supplies for bacteriological examination. Section 111 of the Public Health Act, 1936 states that it shall be the duty of a local authority to take from time to time such steps as may be necessary for ascertaining the sufficiency and wholesomeness of the water supplies within their district so that in addition to the sampling for wholesomeness, it is also within the purview of the Council to draw the attention of the Board to inadequacy if it occurs. It is true to say, however, that this is hardly necessary because a considerable improvement in the water supply position has been effected since the Board was formed. These improvements have been manifested at St. Arvans where the village supply has been augmented from the Rogerstone Grange source, Earlswood where a scheme to supply 58 properties was practically completed, the long delayed Banton scheme supplying 5 isolated properties, and a proposed link up between Caldicot and Penhow in order to boost up the supply at Caldicot where rapid development has caused water shortage from the old Chepstow Water Company's supply. In addition to these, existing supplies have been maintained and there has been no cause for complaint. Certain areas still require improvements, notably - Llangwm, Llansoy and Llanvair Discoed.

The following table shows the results of samples taken during the year.

Parish	Samples	Raw	Treated	<u>RESULTS</u>	
				Satisfactory	Un-Satisfactory
Severn Tunnel Area	21	-	21	21	-
Devauden	5	5	-	5	-
Tintern	5	5	-	5	-
Shirenewton	4	4	-	4	-
Mathern	5	-	5	5	-
St. Arvans	7	-	7	7	-
	47	14	33	47	-

Attention should be drawn to the position of dwellings in the Parish of Itton which are at present supplied from two old private estate schemes which are both in a poor state of repair and the sources of which become polluted periodically. It appears that there is little hope for the improvement in supply arrangements for the inhabitants of this area as the Council rejected an application some years ago to take over this scheme on the grounds of its defective state. Something ought to be done, however, to assist these consumers, particularly at summer time. One wonders if it is not possible to link up with the adjoining Parish of Devauden in order to improve conditions. Similarly at St. Arvans, development is still restricted despite the improvement by linking with Rogerstone Grange and the position will not be satisfactory until the supply is augmented from Tintern as proposed by the Water Board.



## HOUSING

During the year the Council constructed a further 6 houses at Caldicot and were committed to build an additional 342. These were principally for steelworkers and whilst this may be satisfactory in one sense, it does nothing to reduce the list of applicants on the Council's own list and this number does not appear to diminish during the years. As the end of 1961 there were 301 such applicants, the majority of whom had little hope of being rehoused in the foreseeable future.

In addition to the building of houses, the Council also built 20 bungalows for aged persons at Caldicot, St. Arvans and Rogiet. The purpose of this programme was to provide smaller accommodation for aged tenants of Council houses thus releasing the larger houses for further allocation to families. The selection of tenants was confined to existing Council tenants and was not extended to persons living in privately owned houses.

Two further privately owned houses were purchased at Caldicot for £500 and it was intended to carry out repairs and improvements for which a Contract price of £1595 was **accepted**.

The Council placed at the disposal of the County Council a pair of houses under construction at Caldicot which were converted into one dwelling for occupation by foster parents and children. This was an innovation for the Council who also decided to purchase a large building at Sudbrook for improvement and adaption to rehouse problem families and those who had been evicted, until more permanent arrangements could be made.

During the year 24 Improvement Grants were made in accordance with the Council's policy of previous years of giving every encouragement to owners to improve their dwellings and the following table gives an indication of the number and type of such grants together with the total to date.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
		£
Standard Grants 1961	15	1760
Total to December, 1961	44	5660
Discretionary Grants 1961	9	2691
Total to December, 1961	111	29950

A further 3 houses were dealt with as being unfit for further occupation and undertakings not to relet the premises were accepted in each case. This leaves a total of 29 dwellings still to be dealt with in this manner but it is true to say that other houses, not originally scheduled for demolition, are

now bordering on this category because of the lack of repairs executed during the post war years. One rarely receives complaints from tenants nowadays regarding defects to their houses and most items of disrepair are noted as a result of routine inspections. It is assumed that tenants will not complain because they would prefer to live in an unfit house rather than pay the increased rent which would invariably result if the house was rendered fit. No certificates of disrepair were issued during the year.

23 applications to take in lodgers in Council houses were received necessitating inspections to ensure no overcrowding would result. The Council operate their own overcrowding standard based on bedroom areas only and this is more realistic than the Housing Act and works most satisfactorily. The general standard of cleanliness in Council houses was maintained with the exception of a small minority and no cases of verminous dwellings were noted.

There were 32 caravans licensed during the year and 15 of these were on individual sites whilst the remainder consisted of 12 and 5 respectively on 2 sites. Regular inspections were made and no difficulty experienced. The general standard was high and the caravans were occupied either by single persons or married couples without children except in 2 cases. Most of the itinerant contracting staff engaged on the new steelworks at Llanwern were sited in the adjoining rural district and the overflow into this district was remarkably small.



## REFUSE COLLECTION

The Council operate two vehicles and give all parts of the district a weekly collection. This was done at a cost of £6053 for the year compared with £5512 last year and £2991 five years ago. Disposal is effected at 2 tips in the district and one tip in the adjoining Urban District, the cost of maintenance being jointly borne by the two Authorities. One of these tips was purchased compulsorily in 1953 with an estimated life of 35 years, but owing to the unforeseen rapid growth of Caldicot it will be necessary to find alternative tipping arrangements in approximately 2 years. Demonstrations of various refuse vehicles were held during the latter part of the year with a view to purchasing in the following year. Weekly collection of refuse from Sudbrook Pulp Mill was carried out and the income derived therefrom amounted to £111. At the present time shops and hotels receive a free collection but in view of the bulk of refuse involved, it may shortly be necessary to review this position and make a weekly charge. One of the difficulties in this respect is the question of what constitutes "trade refuse" as many cases have been referred to the courts over the years and the decisions in the main have been that it is the character of the refuse rather than its place of production which is the determining factor.

Generally speaking the standard of dustbins was good and in 34 cases referred to the Office by the Refuse Collectors, new bins were provided. It is of considerable assistance in this respect that the Council supply bins to their own houses and these now account for 24% of the houses from which refuse is collected.

Considerable care has to be taken in the disposal of refuse as the tips operated by the Council are only partly controlled. That means that no-one is employed fulltime on the tips but the refuse loaders are responsible for adequately covering each days refuse and other labour is regularly employed to complete the work of raking down, covering, making roadways etc., when available. Tip fires are a hazard, being more prevalent of recent years since the introduction of all night slow burning grates where the residue from such grates is often placed in the bin in a smouldering condition. It is a most difficult task to control these fires and although they have occurred spasmodically at Portskewett, the tip is fortunately situated  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the nearest house. The Rodent Operative makes regular inspections and during the summer treatment for the prevention of nuisance from flies is carried out.

The placing of litter baskets in various points throughout the district was continued during the year but several had to be replaced as a result of vandalism.

# FACTORIES ACT

The following tables show the inspections of factories within the district - the supervision of which is partly divided between this Authority and the Factory Inspectorate. In addition, the assistance of the Alkali Inspector is sought where nuisances occur from factories coming within his jurisdiction and it is pleasing to record that cordial relations and active co-operation are always maintained with both these departments.

Premises	Number of Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	17	41	-	-
Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	25	62	-	-
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority - (excluding outworkers premises).	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	42	103	-	-

Ctd.....

	Number of cases in which defects were:				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	3	3	-	-	-
Overcrowding					
Unreasonable temperature					
Inadequate ventilation					
Ineffective drainage of floors	2	2	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)					
TOTAL:	7	7	-	-	-

# RODENT CONTROL

The Council employ one fulltime rodent operator who also assists with other duties in the Department as and when required and the following table shows the number of inspections made during the year:-

	Local Authority	TYPES OF PROPERTY		
		Dwelling Houses	All other Premises	Agricultural
No. of Properties inspected as a result of				
a). Notification		354	4	
b). Survey under the Act	3	471	36	326
Total Inspections and Reinspections	36	1581	52	326

In addition to the above the following sewer treatments were carried out:-

Number of manholes baited	194
No. of poison baited manholes showing complete take	Nil
No. of poison baited manholes showing partial take	28
No. of poison baited manholes showing no take	166

## FOOD

The following table shows the number and type of food premises in the district:-

Premises	Number	Inspections
Bakehouses	3	14
Butchers	6	33
Fish and Fruit Premises	4	19
Food Vehicles	7	27
Ice Cream Premises	22	38
Provision Shops	35	156
Restaurants and Kitchens	29	94

The following foodstuffs were examined and found to be unfit for human consumption. They were disposed of on the Refuse Tip at Portskewett.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Reason for Condemnation</u>	<u>Amount in Lbs</u>
Tinned Goods	Decomposed and blown	22
Bacon	Decomposed	5
Cheese	Mould	6

The quantity of condemned foodstuffs once again is relatively small, compared to several years ago and appears now to be fairly constant each year.

There are no slaughterhouses within the district, the butchers generally purchasing their meat "off the hook" at Newport or alternatively purchasing live animals at Chepstow market for slaughtering at Newport and consequent transport. The transport of meat was again satisfactory due largely to supervision of vehicles and staff by Newport Borough Public Health Department.



Routine inspections were carried out to food premises and informal action taken in 9 cases. The premises were maintained in a satisfactory structural state and 7 of the cases referred to related in each case to employees for wearing dirty clothing, smoking and not having sufficiently clean hands. In each case, a warning was given and it appeared to have the desired result. The other two cases necessitated repairs to the structure of the premises and cleansing of walls.

2 premises were registered for the storage and sale of icecream and regular inspections were made. There are three bakehouses within the district and one of these was rebuilt and modernised after being burned down. These establishments were well run, clean and generally satisfactory. The transport of bread was also investigated and presented no problem.

## SEWERAGE

Now that the newly formed Water Board has taken over the Council's liabilities in this field, the Council are able to concentrate upon the major remaining problem of providing sewerage facilities to those parishes which are not served at present. This will be a costly operation and a start has been made at Caldicot with the first stage of the comprehensive scheme to serve Rogiet, Caldicot and Portskewett. These parishes will be linked to a common treatment works and outfall to the River Severn. The first stage, at a cost of £148,656, is to provide a pumping station, and rising main to the new outfall sewer taken into the main stream of the tidal river and this will enable future development, mainly for the housing of steel workers from Llanwern, to proceed at the North side of Caldicot village. Temporary consent has been given by the Usk River Board to the discharge of crude sewage for a limited number of additional dwellings but obviously the installation of the treatment works is a matter of considerable urgency. The remaining parts of the scheme which will be divided into 4 stages will enable many dwellings at present served by cesspools to be connected to the public sewer and will also enable development to proceed which has hitherto been held back for lack of sewerage facilities.

Once more it is disappointing to report that no progress was made on the Undy/Magor joint scheme and development here, as in Caldicot, is held up for lack of adequate drainage facilities.

Difficulty was experienced in obtaining land necessary to site the disposal works and pumping stations which were required for the proposed Tintern Sewerage Scheme and therefore the anticipated start on this system was delayed. As stated in previous reports, this tourist village is the one which presents the most urgent problem and where conditions are extremely poor in regard to drainage facilities. Many premises are drained directly to the River Wye and existing cesspools and septic tanks often give rise to nuisance. It is hoped that this scheme will receive priority so that an early start can be made to improve conditions in this village.

No progress was made at Caerwent due to protracted consultations with the Ministry of Works who appeared reluctant to permit excavations for sewer laying in this village where the Ministry themselves are carrying out their own archaeological works to expose the remains of the original town.

Although the Council had decided to proceed with the scheme to serve St. Arvans it had not commenced by the end of the year although tenders were about to be invited.

The cesspool emptying vehicle with its crew of 2 emptied 869 pits during the year at a total cost of £2.6s.0d. per pit. The Council give a completely free service to all domestic premises and, since abolishing the nominal charge of 10/- which was previously made after the first 2 emptyings, the scheme has not been abused by anyone and gives a very satisfactory service particularly in times of emergency.



Sewage disposal plants on Council Estates are inspected regularly to ensure that they are functioning correctly and samples of effluent are taken for analysis by the Public Analyst.

The Council own two public conveniences at Caldicot and Tintern and these are inspected regularly to ascertain if they are properly cleansed. The standard is quite good although occasionally these premises are abused particularly after weekends. Although they are sometimes found in a poor condition of cleanliness, it is fortunate that comparatively little damage is done to the premises by vandalism.





